

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-05

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CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII IMMEDIATE 1151

S E C R E T STATE 217707

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, US, AS

SUBJECT: GOA APPROVAL FOR CONTINGENCY PLAN TO PROVIDE
BACK-UP SATELLITE AT WOOMERA

1. BACKGROUND: CURRENTLY THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE US OWNED MSC-46 SATELLITE TERMINAL AT WOOMERA BECAUSE OF THE DEGRADATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM DUE TO THE EMPLOYEES' STRIKE. THE NEED FOR ALTERNATIVE OR REDUNDANT COMMUNICATIONS IS CLEARLY RECOGNIZED BY BOTH THE US AND THE GOA UNDER UNDERSTANDINGS THAT INTERPRET THE 1969 US-AUSTRALIAN AGREEMENT ON OPERATION OF WOOMERA FACILITY. IN THE 10 NOVEMBER 1969 UNDERSTANDING, REFERRING TO US EMBASSY NOTE 255 ALSO OF NOVEMBER 10, 1969, BOTH PARTIES AGREE QUOTE REDUNDANT AND DIVERSE

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COMMUNICATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL UNQUOTE.

2. THEREFORE, REQUEST THAT EMBASSY MAKE FOLLOWING PRESENTATION TO GAO ON PRIORITY BASIS:

(A) UNDER US-GOA 1969 AGREEMENT ON WOOMERA FACILITY AND SUBSIDIARY INTERPRETIVE UNDERSTANDINGS, THE ADOD, FOLLOWING

PRIOR CONSULTATION BY THE USAF AND AT THE EXPENSE OF THE USAF, HAS RESPONSIBILITY TO ARRANGE FOR ALLOCATION, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE OF CIRCUITS FOR TRANSMISSION OF ALL

DATA FROM THE SATELLITE STATION TO THE AUSTRALIAN OVERSEAS TERMINALS AND ON OVERSEAS COMMUNICATIONS LINKS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF AUSTRALIAN AUTHORITIES. (SEE QUOTE IMPLEMENTING ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AND THE AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONCERNING THE JOINT DEFENSE SPACE COMMUNICATIONS STATION AT WOOMERA, UNQUOTE PARAGRAPH 20B.)

(B) THEREFORE, US REQUESTS THAT GOA ARRANGE FOR ALTERNATE COMMUNICATIONS TO INSURE REDUNDANCY AND TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION FROM MSC-46, THE CONTINUANCE OF WHICH IS VITAL TO OUR JOINT INTERESTS.

(C) THE US REALIZES DIFFICULTY GOA MAY HAVE IN COMPLYING WITH THIS REQUEST, GIVEN CURRENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS STRIKE AND POLITICAL SENSITIVITY OF US-AUSTRALIAN DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP. THEREFORE, IN THE EVENT GOA CANNOT COMPLY WITH REQUEST IN SUBPARA 2(B) ABOVE, THE US HAS PREPARED A CONTINGENCY PLAN TO INSURE CONTINUITY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND AVAILABILITY OF A BACK-UP TO MSC-46. UPON GOA APPROVAL, THE US IS PREPARED TO DEPLOY A MOBILE AN-TSC-54 SATELLITE TERMINAL LOCATED IN HAWAII WITH A CREW OF 18
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MILITARY PERSONNEL TO WOOMERA. THE SATELLITE CREW IN HAWAII IS ON ALERT, AND PREPARATIONS ARE BEING MADE FOR THE EXECUTION OF THIS DEPLOYMENT.

(D) THIS CONTINGENCY WILL ONLY BE A TEMPORARY MEASURE, DESIGNED TO INSURE CONTINUITY OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE NEXT THIRTY DAYS, OR, IF NECESSARY AND GOA APPROVAL IS GRANTED, FOR A LONGER PERIOD. EXECUTION OF THIS CONTINGENCY WILL REQUIRE TRANSPORT OF 18 MILITARY PERSONNEL (TERMINAL CREW), AND APPROXIMATELY 83,000 POUNDS OF EQUIPMENT ON EITHER ONE C-5A OR UP TO 3 C-141 TRANSPORT PLANES. EQUIPMENT WILL INCLUDE AN AN/TSC-54 SATCOM TERMINAL, AN ANTENNA TRAILER, A SUPPLY SHELTER, AND AN/TCC-79 MULTIPLEX TERMINAL, A 45 KW GENERATOR, A MAINTENANCE SHELTER, A CONEX, AND A MOTOR GENERATOR CONVERTER.

(E) PLEASE NOTE TO GOA AUTHORITIES THAT THE AN/TSC-54 PERFORMS A FUNCTION IDENTICAL TO MSC-46 AND ACTUALLY HAS SLIGHTLY LESS CAPACITY; HOWEVER, IT IS ADEQUATE TO PERFORM AS BACKUP. THE AN/TSC-54 IS THE ONLY MOBILE SUPER HIGH FREQUENCY COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE TERMINAL IN THE US INVENTORY AVAILABLE FOR SUCH EMERGENCIES.

(F) PLEASE ALSO INFORM GOA THAT THE US MAY, AT A LATER DATE, REQUEST GOA ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING CONTINGENCY SUPPORT TO THE JOINT US-AUSTRALIAN FACILITY IN MELBOURNE.

THE US IS NOW CONSIDERING WHETHER THIS FACILITY, SUPPORTED BY COMMERCIAL SATELLITE, MAY ALSO NEED BACKUP COMMUNICATIONS TO ENSURE CONTINUITY.

3. REQUEST REPLY ASAP AFTER GOA RESPONDS. CHRISTOPHER

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